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The Spectator

Thursday, April 11, 2024

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Number VII

Publishing the Truth, From Good Motives and For Justifiable Ends

Hamilton community watches the solar eclipse

by Erin Delaney '26
NEWS EDITOR

On Monday, April 8, Hamilton College students, faculty, and staff participated in viewing the biggest astronomical event of the year: the Great American Solar Eclipse. This was the last total solar eclipse visible in New York until 2079, hitting 99.4 percent coverage on campus at approximately 3:24 p.m. on Monday afternoon. Syracuse and the nearby Adirondacks were on the total solar eclipse's pathway, while Hamilton and Clinton were on the edge of the pathway. In the days leading up to the eclipse, areas in the pathway planned for their populations to swell. New York State Police and other agencies shared guidelines and safety tips for travelers including being prepared for traffic jams, charging cell phones, filling up cars with gas ahead of the event and bringing extra supplies.

Hamilton students had been anticipating the astronomical event as well. Lila Cahill '27 says, "the energy on the Hamilton campus was exciting to see because everybody was interested and talking about the eclipse, which made it feel like a very wholesome and fun experience. I was glad to be a part of it."

Around 2:00 p.m. a crowd gathered at Burke Library for the Campus Viewing Party on the front steps, where they could see the eclipse through telescopes, eclipse goggles and pinhole viewers. Hamilton College set up two eclipse glasses distribution points throughout the day for students to pick up their glasses. Lily Rizzoli '24 joined the library viewing spot in front of the library during the eclipse. "I did not expect to see so many people from the community come out," she told *The Spectator*.

An off-campus total eclipse viewing was hosted by Associate Professor of Instruction for Physics Adam Lark, where campus community members could take buses to White-Otter Fish & Game Club in Woodgate, N.Y. Eclipse glasses and telescopes were available for viewing. According to Lark, the event gathered a little over 800 people, including students, staff, faculty and community members. Hamilton coordinated with the local library to have community members attend the eclipse event as well. Lark says that people were generally relaxed and having fun, playing soccer in the field and setting up camping tents. "It was a good vibe, for a lack of a better word," Lark comments. "Everyone was hanging out outside enjoying the day." When the eclipse reached totality, Lark says "it got really quiet all of a sudden. It was like a shadow had passed over us. Everyone had a moment of disbelief. Then everyone started cheering."

PHOTO COURTESY OF PROF. ROBERT KNIGHT

Hamilton College students use their eclipse glasses to watch as the moon gradually passes over the sun at the total eclipse viewing in Woodgate, N.Y.

One of the popular viewing spots off-campus was Verona Beach State Park, where Hamilton students joined crowds of people from the surrounding towns in viewing the eclipse. People from all ages traveled various distances to gather in the field, picnic tables, and surrounding the lake at the state park. Groups of college students played field games, families had picnics and barbeques and others tailgated in the expansive parking lot. Sophie Antone '24, who went to Verona Beach State Park with her friends to watch the eclipse says, "the one in 2017 was underwhelming so this one definitely exceeded my expectations and was so cool!"

The Hamilton Men's and Women's Rowing teams went on a joint row on the Erie Canal into the path of totality for the solar eclipse. Hunter Howard '27, a member of the Men's Rowing team, says "it was an incredible opportunity to incorporate this once in a lifetime event with the sport and people I love. I will always have the memory of the hour-long row to the path of totality, where maybe it was actually more so about the journey rather than the destination." Kai Polozie '27 reported to *The Spectator* that he was very grateful for the rowing team giving them "the op-

portunity to row into totality along the Erie Canal." He says "it was wonderful to get to experience the eclipse with my teammates, especially in such a unique place." John Myles '24 summed up his experience rowing into the path of totality with three words: "It was fue."

Hamilton students also traveled to Lake Delta in Oneida County to view the eclipse, where they had overwhelmingly positive experiences and were surprised by the incredible effects of the natural phenomenon.

Susie Anderson '27 says she had not thought much of the eclipse before, "but when it was actually happening it felt really cool. I loved the fact that it felt like a purely human moment when everyone started cheering and clapping when full totality hit and everything got dark."

Marcie Coeny '26 says she set her expectations low because she didn't want to be disappointed, but she "really enjoyed the eclipse." She told *The Spectator*, "I feel like it deeply connected me with nature and more so with my friends. I'm so happy to have experienced such a rare event with people I love."

There was a strong sense of community among the groups of people gathered to watch the eclipse. Abby Baron '26, who attended Professor Lark's Woodgate viewing, says, "It was fun to be around everyone from Hamilton experiencing such a cool event together. It created a nice sense of community and it's definitely something I'll remember for years to come."

Lark says that "the most beautiful part about these big astronomical events, eclipses especially, is that it just brings everyone together. The comradery is just palpable. No matter your religion or your political beliefs, everyone is there hanging out, sharing space and enjoying the sky."

PHOTO COURTESY OF DOUG HIGGINS

A drone captures the birds-eye view of the crowds at Lark's Woodgate solar eclipse viewing.

Hamilton welcomes U.N. panel to dicuss role of small states in international security

by Mia Antonini '26
NEWS EDITOR

On April 9, Hamilton welcomed three United Nations (UN) figures to speak on the role of small member states, particularly in promoting global security. The panel took place in the Kirner-Johnson Building's Red Pit and was well-attended by students, faculty members, and since the event was open to the public, local community members.

The discussion invited H.E. Inga Rhonda King, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of St. Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations, H.E. Michael Imran Kanu, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Sierra Leone to the United Nations, and Ms. Kristel Lõuk, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Estonia to the United Nations. The panel was moderated by Professor Vandi Minah, the Sol M. Linowitz Visiting Professor of International Affairs.

Prior to King's career in diplomacy, she worked in the private sector. She is also a business owner, management accountant, strategist, as well as the author of three books. King also has a strong background in mathematics and chemistry, holding a Bachelor of Science in the two fields. She also acted as the chair of the Investment Promotions Agency of Saint Vinent and the Grenadines and the former Honorary Consul for Portugal to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

In addition to his position as the current Ambassador and Permanent Representative in Sierra Leone to the United Nations and the Representative of Sierra Leone at the United Nations Security Council, Kanu is also the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone in the International Seabed Authority (ISA), a member of the Legal and Technical Commission of the ISA, and the Vice-President and Coordinator of the New York Working Group of the Assembly of State parties of the International Criminal Court (ICC), co-chairing the Review Mechanism of the ICC.

Ms. Lõuk became a part of the Estonian Foreign Service in 2005 and before her role as the Deputy Permanent Representative of the Estonian mission, she acted as the Political Coordinator in

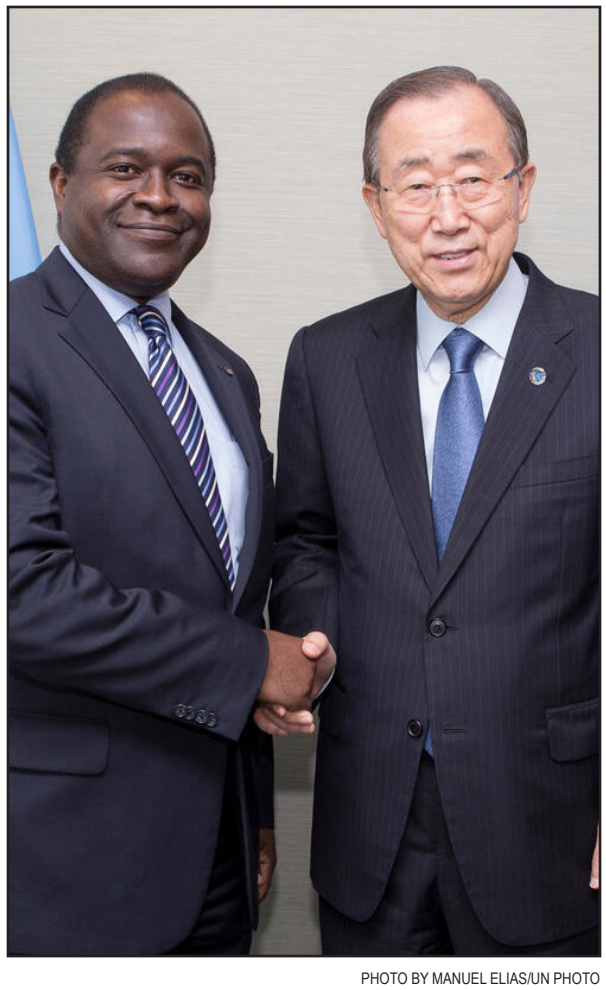

PHOTO BY MANUEL ELIAS/UN PHOTO

Sol M. Linowitz Visiting Professor of International Affairs Vandi Minah moderated the panel on small states in the UN.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MICHAEL IMRAN KANU ON X

Pannelist Michael Imran Kanu is the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Sierra Leone to the United Nations.

the Estonian Mission to the United Nations while Estonia was elected as a member of the United Nations Security Council. Ms. Lõuk also has served as Vice-President of the UNICEF Executive Board while a Developmental and Humanitarian Affairs Counselor at the Estonian Mission to the United Nations.

Each of the presenters began the panel with individual speeches exploring themes of the United Nations Security Council, the role of small states in international security, and more. The first to speak was King, who egan by highlighting how there are currently 55 conflicts "flaring" globally.

She also shared the strengths of the current International Order, including the multilateralism and connectivity it supports; however, she also noted how the effectiveness of the Order is dependent on the cooperation of the states and their prioritization of the common good. King also highlighted the power of big nations, particularly in communicating messages. "Shaping narratives is what big states do best," she said. This strength of big states further underscores the importance, she said, of small states coming together in solidarity. This unity can also be seen. according to King, between bigger and smaller states, for example in the collaboration between the A3 (the three African Nations in the UN Security Council) and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR DEFENSE AND SECURITY

Ms. Kristel Lõuk is the Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Estonia to the United Nations.

Lõuk began her presentation highlighting how while the Republic of Estonia was a member of the League of Nations, there was not a founding member of the United Nations due to the Republic's struggles and occupation following World War II. Estonia eventually joined the organization in 1991, the same year the Republic gained independence. One particular issue emphasized by Lõuk was cybersecurity. She explained how in a time without a significant emphasis on the pressing issue of cyberattacks in the Security Council, Estonia pushed for greater conversation and awareness on the issue.

Finally, Kanu shared how even though large states are a significant component of the UN Security Council, "the glue is really the small states." Kanu also cited the crucial question of the panel: "can small states really seize the moment and save the world?" In response, Kanu saw two answers— "no" and "yes, but."

The panel then opened up to questions from the audience, the first of which asked whether there exists an agreement to be aligned among the small states. King replied noting that there is an attempt to revive a "non-align movement". She also highlighted how ultimately, states are not rational, but realists.

The next question asked whether large states seek the council of small states. King replied highlighting how small states tend to jump into vacancies and take on "various leadership roles across committees… we will set aside our own interests for the greater good, whereas you will see big powers like India, Brazil, or Germany… it's very different…" She concluded saying, "Yes, they come to us very often… we remain indispensable. "

The conversation continued to flow between panelists and attendees, including Professor Jumet of the Government department who inquired regarding the differences in how Global Northern and Global Southern States take on issues.

Overall, the event encouraged conversation regarding the vitality of small states, particularly in relation to the UN Security Council and alliances with powers of all sizes.

PHOTO BY JOHN PENNEY/PASS BLUE

H.E. Inga Rhonda King is the Ambassador, and Permanent Representative of St. Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations.

EDITORIAL

April 11, 2024

Dear members of the Hamilton Community,

We hope everyone is doing well this week and that you were able to take time out of your day to enjoy the solar eclipse. While the next solar eclipse visible in New York will not take place until 2079, another eclipse will be visible in different parts of North America in 2044. And, a lunar eclipse is set to take place just next year that should be visible in New York.

Get excited! Class and Charter day, scheduled for May 3, 2024, is on the horizon and CAB has finally announced the headliner: Dayglow! The opening of the show will be performed by Hot Chelle Rae, Junior Varsity and HEAT. Keep your eyes out for more emails and updates in the coming days.

Angels in America, Part One: Millennium Approaches is finally opening! The show has been in the works for months now and promises to blow audiences away. The first show is 7:30 p.m., Thursday, April 11, at the Romano Flex Theater.

Interested in becoming a tri-sport athlete? Sign up for Hamtrek! You can run, bike and swim all on your own or by breaking each part down with a team. Check your email for instructions. If you are not interested in participating, make sure you come out on April 26 to support those taking part.

If you are returning to campus next semester, make sure to check your registration times. The registration period for fall courses begins on April for rising seniors and goes for 6 days according to class year. You can find your registration time on WebAdvisor.

Hamilton's Closet Thrift Store Pop-up is happening on Saturday, April 13, at 2:30 p.m. at the Events Barn! Come by to do some thrifting without having to leave campus.

After Dark is hosting a Miami Beach Party at 10:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 13. There will be a full bar, a mechanical shark and lots of food. Find the party in the Events Barn.

Feeling peckish? At 12:30 p.m. on Sunday, April 14, the Spanish Club is hosting a guacamole-making party! Stop by the Days-Massolo living room for chips, guac and a good time.

Sincerely,
The Spectator

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The Spectator

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Letters to the Editor are welcome from all students, alumni/ae, faculty, friends of the college, and Hamilton community members.

The Spectator has the following policies for submission:

1. Submissions are due by 10:00 p.m. on the Monday before publication. The editors reserve the right to refuse any late submissions.
2. Letters should be no longer than 500 words. The editors reserve the right to cut off letters at 500 words.
3. Letters submitted anonymously will not be printed.
4. *The Spectator* reserves the right not to publish any letter it deems inappropriate for publication.
5. If a piece is determined to be libelous, an unwarranted invasion of privacy, or an unnecessary and/or unwarranted ad hominem or personal attack, it will not be published.

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April 11, 2024

Professors reflect on the solar eclipse

by Sarafina Madden '26
FEATURES EDITOR

PHOTO COURTESY OF SARAFINA MADDEN '26

Students and faculty gather outside Burke library to watch the eclipse on Monday.

Monday's solar eclipse marks a significant moment in history. We will not see another eclipse in New York until 2079. On campus, around 3:00 p.m., KJ and the Science Center were completely deserted as students gathered to witness this astronomical moment. Students, faculty and families gathered on Burke Library's front steps wearing the special eclipse glasses and eating eclipse inspired mooncakes. Others laid blankets down to watch with friends and teammates on Minor Field. This celestial moment naturally leads to both scientific and philosophical questions. Philosophy Professor, Russel Marcus and physics Professor Adam Lark offered their perspectives on this historical moment.

Lark detailed the planning process that went behind organizing the off-campus excursion to view Monday's eclipse. He explained: "It was over a year of planning. I knew that I had to find a location in totality for the campus to attend, so there was a fair amount of scouting that had to be done. The hardest part about finding a spot in the adirondacks is there are so few locations that aren't all trees! Once I found the big open field that is the White Otter Fish and Game Club I knew that we were in business." Beyond finding a location, Lark also described how difficult it was to manage transportation, equipping students with the proper eclipse-watching gear and more generally orchestrating the event. Lark reported that "There were about a dozen physics professors and students that were the "boots-on-the-ground" help for the event, and they helped move, set up, and run the entire event."

Lark gave a brief scientific explanation of the eclipse in layman's terms: "An eclipse occurs when the Earth enters the shadow of the Moon. In the sky, the Moon blocks out the Sun in the sky for a small portion of the Earth, causing darkness during the day." He also noted that the Earth is unique, as it is the only planet in the solar system that gets total solar eclipses. In what he described as an "amazing coincidence," Lark explained that "our moon is 400 times closer to the Sun, and 400 times smaller, so they appear the exact same size in the sky. This means that the moon can completely cover the sun in the sky and cast its shadow down onto earth. While the solar eclipse was a special moment for all of us to witness, Lark encouraged students to also look out for lunar eclipses. The next lunar eclipse is on March 13 in 2025, starting around midnight. He also expressed his excitement about viewing the 12P/Pons-Brooks comet, and explained he is installing a new telescope in the observatory so students will be able to observe this comet.

Lark reflected that "Everyone gets so wrapped up in their every-day lives. Tests to complete, deadlines, relationships. It is important to be able to step back and see things in a context that is bigger than yourself." Lark articulated a sentiment many people attested to following the eclipse: "One thing that people mentioned at the eclipse is a feeling of being small. And I think that it is important to feel small every now and again."

The eclipse viewing party in the Adrindoacks turned out to be an incredible success. Lark reported that 800 people ended up coming to the event. He also commented on the communal feel of the event: "Students were playing games, going on hikes, throwing frisbees, and generally having a good time interacting with each other. Everyone was having a good time being outside with each other. That is one thing that I love about these big events in astronomy, it brings everyone together. The camaraderie was palpable." Lark articulated that he is passionate about astronomy because it allows him to consider big questions about the universe: "Where did we come from, why are we here, are there other life out there?"

Russel Marcus, as a philosophy professor at Hamilton, is grappling with these same questions. Marcus believes that there is always an eclipse somewhere. He illustrated this with a simple hypothetical: "Imagine you had a jet pack and a space suit, so that you could fly anywhere in the solar system, even just anywhere pretty nearby. You could always position yourself so that the moon is located between you and the sun. By moving with the moon, you could be in the shadow of an eclipse at all times. You could also position yourself so that the Earth was always between you and the sun, and the same would be true for any other celestial body. It's always an eclipse somewhere." He noted: "That it fell on us this week is kind of a random accident."

Questions about the nature of the universe have been plaguing philosophers since ancient times. For example, Marcus explained that "Galileo, in his wonderful little diary called Sidereus Nuncius (The Starry Messenger), describes how he learned to grind lenses to create a telescope that he then turned up to the moon to discover craters." Ancient philosophers' investigations of the universe forced them to recognize that they were not at the center of the universe. Anyone who watched the eclipse on Monday might have had that same epiphany. Marcus reflected: "People still struggle to see ourselves as the happy accidents of nature that we are, and to find meaning in what has none, intrinsically." In his concluding remarks, Marcus affirmed that "An eclipse can be a useful and pleasant reminder to reflect on our place in the world and the good fortune we have to be in it."

April 11, 2024

Advice: majors and study abroad

by Meg Stroup '26
FEATURES EDITOR

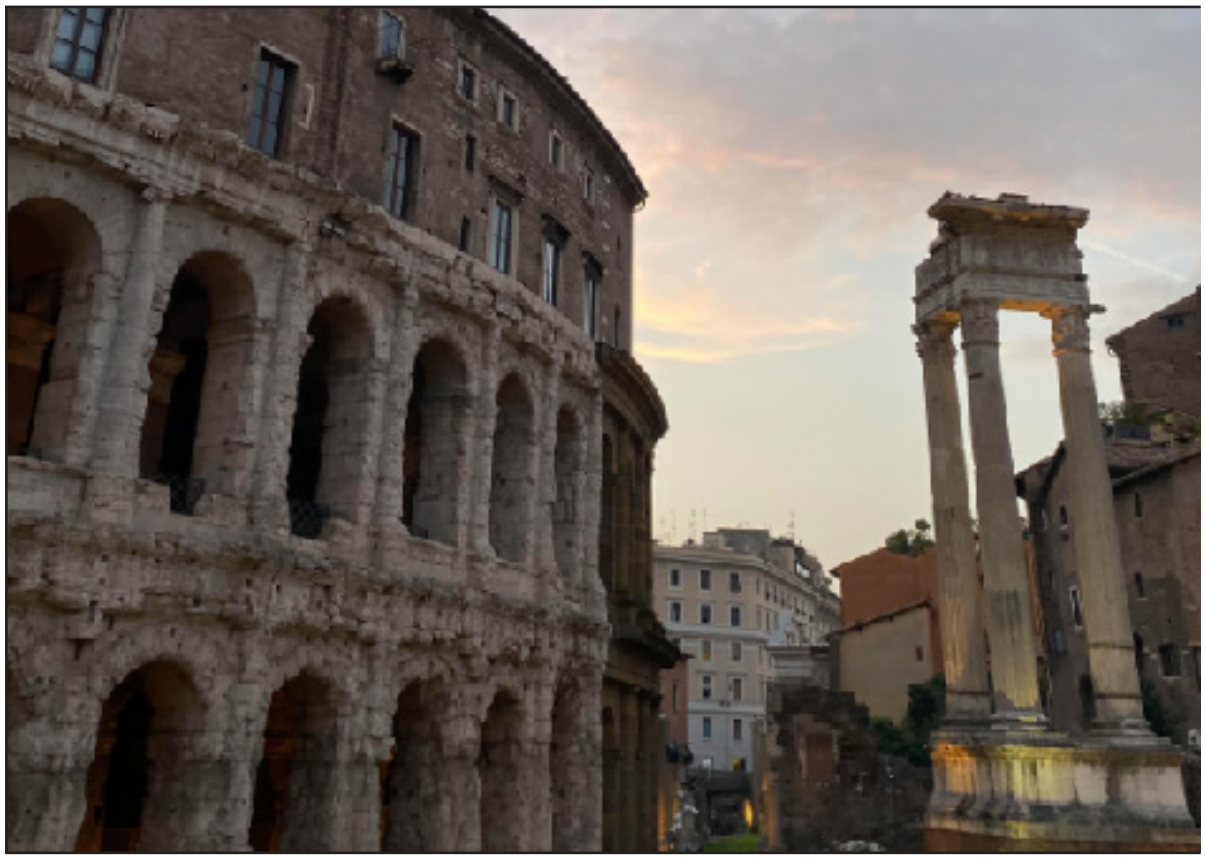


PHOTO COURTESY OF SARAFINA MADDEN '26

The sun sets in Rome next to the Colosseum and street lights around the city turn on.

I regret the major I chose but am so far along. What should I do?

This common dilemma causes many students' stress, and I think the best solution is to keep yourself in check and weigh your options. There is a strong stigma around majors that they are the end-all be-all, however in reality for most careers it is your out of classroom experience that will more greatly dictate your professional path. If you decide you have absolutely no interest in your current major, it may be worthwhile to pursue a different major and sacrifice some free-time for a packed couple of semesters filling the lower-level requirements. However, if you still tolerate your major and only have a couple of courses left, finishing the major you no longer love may actually provide you with more time to explore different interests. Regardless of what you major in, you will still grow as a student and accrue the critical thinking skills necessary to be successful in whatever career path you choose.

I can't decide what to minor in. What should I do?

I am a firm believer that minors are for exploring what you are passionate about. Minors are not what's going to get you a job. While they definitely cannot hurt, I would frame your thinking more in terms of interest and enjoyment rather than solely practicality. I personally find it much easier to thoroughly dedicate myself to a course when I am truly passionate about it and am taking the course purely for my own enrichment. If you take really STEM heavy classes for example, being a creative writing minor could be a great outlet to explore a different side of yourself and take a stimulating break from your typical schedule. Taking courses without your career in mind can be a lower stakes opportunity to pursue something just for its own sake.

Should I study abroad?

For many, studying abroad is an amazing and enlightening experience, while for others, studying abroad could be something that is completely unnecessary, and this completely depends on the person. I am currently grappling with this myself. There are many learning experiences you can have abroad that you won't be able to get at Hamilton. Some examples could be to learn a language, live more independently, bond with a family through a homestay, immerse yourself in a different culture, or learn about the government/health system through an internship or research. Traveling with your friends can be a legitimate reason to go, but even so you should try to find reasons independent of that which could make your experience fulfilling. On the other hand, staying at Hamilton could be the right move for you. Life at Hamilton still goes on when your friends are abroad, and there is such a tight knit community here that you would inevitably make your own connections or foster old ones if you stayed. It might be nice to have a semester without your closest friends on campus because you will inevitably branch out and have new experiences. Ask yourself: does this make sense for my field of study? Determining a more specific abroad program might make it easier for you to navigate this decision.

At Hamilton everyone seems to be in each other's business. How do I not let that get in my head?

While Hamilton's small size has countless merits, I have found—and my friends agree—that it can sometimes feel like we are living in a complete bubble. Everyone seems to be invested in everyone else's lives here, myself included, and while that can definitely be fun sometimes, but it can also feel overwhelming. I find it helpful to remind myself that I still have a life outside of here. It's important to continue to foster your relationships from home. Call your friends and family. If you know someone with a car, try to get off campus. Engage in HAVOC's community service opportunities. Make time to consume media. Watch movies and T.V. shows, or even the news. Doing all of these things will help you feel a little more grounded in reality and make the noise of Hamilton gossip just a little bit quieter.

How should I form relationships with my teachers?

In larger classes especially, it can be hard to form a relationship with your professors. While it can be daunting, going to office hours with questions about assignments or just merely a couple of questions about something you talked about in class can be a great way to connect. If office hours seem daunting, emailing professors your thoughts about a lecture or reading is a great way to show them that you are engaged with the course material. It's also important to remember that professors are people too. They are also dealing with their own worries and stresses. Keeping this in mind makes the prospect of talking with them a little less daunting.

April 11, 2024

Senior reflection: Abi Mangiafico

By Sarafina Madden '26
FEATURES EDITOR

How do you feel with graduation nearly five-weeks away?

"I feel ready, I'd say, which I think is a good thing. I think there'll be moments where It's very mundane and it'll be like, oh my gosh, it can't come soon enough. Then there'll be other moments where I'm in my suite with my roommates. Like we're all brushing our teeth together. And I just have this moment of how can I ever leave this place? But I think those both are going to naturally balance as you continue to go through this.Graduation itself is not necessarily something that I'm looking forward to, but I'm very much looking forward to the next chapter."

Do you feel like you've changed over the course of your time at Hamilton?

"Yeah, I think I've changed a lot over my time at Hamilton. I think I've gotten a lot more confident in myself, and a lot more sure of what I want in life, and more decisive. I think it's definitely been attributed to the experiences that I've had, and just putting myself out of my comfort zone to be able to grow. I think the experiences are a huge part of it. When I came to college, I was very quiet.I was very shell shocked and shy. I think being able to meet people and feel so accepted by the people that I'm around and also just try so many different things has been so critical to becoming who I am today."

What advice would you give to students in the grade below you about how to get the most out of their Hamilton experience?

"Personally, I've kind of had a moment this semester, especially 'if not now, when?' that I keep telling myself to try new things and basically just push myself outside of my comfort zone because, but I think especially by the time that you're a junior, hopefully Hamilton feels like a really safe and welcoming space. So I think it's a really great opportunity to then from there, be able to push yourself and keep meeting new people and keep doing new things. My 'if not now when?' moment this week was actually when I signed up for Ham Trek for the full thing. So, I have to train to swim now. I set up a schedule with my friend, uh, with my, one of my roommates actually during lunch, Sam. We're going to start going to the pool almost every day to start training. Because again, when am I going to be in a place, for the time being right now, where I feel this comfortable to try and honestly, most likely make a fool out of myself."

What makes Hamilton special?

"I think it's 100 percent the people. What I love about Hamilton is all of my friends and of those relationships and I don't think it would be the same without them. The relationships that you build throughout and just being able to grow up with people for four years is a really cool and unique experience."

What has been a meaningful extracurricular experience at Hamilton?

"It has to be rugby, without a doubt. I joined the rugby team my sophomore fall because my wonderful roommate, Rebecca, was the social chair and she needed people to join. I was captain for two full semesters. I think that really was just such an experience being able to channel everyone's enthusiasm into something really special. I mean, also, it's running outside on a field with your friends or people that you're about to become friends with. What could be better?

Is there a particular moment that you remember when you realized that Hamilton was a place that you belonged?

"It wasn't my freshman year, which I feel like is not typical. It was actually my sophomore year. I very specifically remember the Fall carnival. They had a bouncy house, and me and Rebecca were doing a relay race. And I remember just feeling so genuinely happy in that moment and feeling like I actually belonged in this space that I maybe didn't feel like that for the first year, but really wanted to."

What are three of your favorite memories at Hamilton?

"Parents weekend of last year's rugby game. It was our biggest crowd that we'd ever had. And also I scored three tries. We had a team tailgate afterwards which was also really cool because these are girls that I've been playing with for over a year and it was really nice to be able to chat with their families and learn more about them. I've kind of enjoyed the mundane of living in the suite. We play Hamilton Headbands which is a game that is kind of like normal headbands, but we make them on post it notes, and they all have to do with Hamilton. So like, Diner Sushi or like Jeff McCarns dog is one of them. I think it also just speaks a lot to the fact that we really all are living the same life. Yesterday, I had a really good moment. I was with three of my closest friends abroad, who actually are all from Hamilton. We all went down to the watering hole and it's just really nice. And it was a gorgeous day for it."

PHOTO COURTESY OF ABI MANGIAFICO '24

Abi Mangiafico '24 plays rugby for Hamilton.

What are you excited for post-grad?

"I think it's hard to sometimes hold that you're very sad for this moment to end, but also very excited for what comes next. You obviously don't want to dismiss this moment by focusing too much on what's ahead but I do think that it's still something that I definitely am really looking forward to. I really like my job. I find it really interesting and engaging, which is super exciting. I'm also moving to New York and I haven't really ever lived in a big city before, which is really exciting. There's also a lot of Hamilton people who are going to be there and I'm really excited to be able to continue to grow those relationships."

April 11, 2024

The fight to uphold LGBTQ+ rights nationwide

by Sylvia Woodbury '27
STAFF WRITER

On April 4, the Gender and Sexuality Union held a vigil for Nex Benedict, a nonbinary student who passed away in February after an altercation at their Oklahoma highschool. When three girls began to mock Benedict and their friends in the bathroom, Benedict threw water at the trio; the girls then cornered and began to beat Benedict, eventually knocking them to the floor, where they lost consciousness.

Although Benedict was taken to the emergency room after the incident, their death, a day later, was ultimately ruled a suicide by the coroner. Officially, details of the case remain fuzzy, including the extent of Benedict's injuries, the nature of the bullying, and the school's level of responsibility in Benedict's death. Many news sources have obscured or outright denied Benedict's gender identity and its relation to their death. What is clear is that violence against trans people is not only prevalent, but increasing, spurred by anti-trans legislation. Benedict had been experiencing bullying over the past year, and Oklahoma is notorious for anti-trans legislation and sentiment. Students are forbidden from using bathrooms that do not correspond with their birth sex, and minors cannot receive gender-affirming care. Senator Tom Woods said in response to Benedict's death, "We are a Republican state—supermajority—in the House and Senate. I represent a constituency that doesn't want that filth in Oklahoma."

According to the Trevor Project, an initiative that provides support to LGBTQ+ youth, 52% of LGBTQ+ kids have been bullied during the past year compared to an average of 20% of high school students. For students attending LGBTQ+ friendly schools, this rate drops to 46%. Queer students are also four times as likely as cishet students to commit suicide. Much of anti-trans rhetoric centers around "protecting children" from a perceived threat—predation by others or transitioning themselves. Yet no studies support the claim that trans people are more likely to commit violent crimes than cisgender people, or that cis women experience harassment or predation by trans women in public restrooms. Indeed, trans people are four times as likely to be victims of a violent crime. In 2022, according to the FBI, hate crimes committed against LGBTQ+ victims increased by 32% percent, with more than 2,400 incidents. This surge of anti-trans violence is fomented by a new wave of legislation seeking to codify birth sex as law, thus preventing trans people from receiving adequate healthcare, as well as ousting them from spaces matching their identities. In 2018, Californian Congressional candidate Jazmina Saavedra hurled insults at a trans woman using the women's restroom until she left the area. In 2022, a transgender man was beaten for using the women's restroom at a campground in Ohio, which he was required to do per the instructions of the camp owner. Legislation allegedly seeking to protect people makes no provision for trans' people's safety, especially endangering children and teenagers, who are especially vulnerable to attacks inside their communities and families. Only ten states require sexual education to include discussions of sexuality and gender identity, while seven states either outright forbid teaching students about sexuality and gender identity or obligate teachers to present such topics in a negative light. For instance, Arizona prohibits curriculum from "portray[ing] homosexuality in a positive manner," while Oklahoma requires it to be taught that homosexuality is "responsible for contact with the AIDS virus." Conservatives believe that education surrounding LGBTQ+ topics will indoctrinate children into queer "ideology," yet no data supports this conclusion. While teaching students about queer identities lowers rates of bullying in schools, it is not supported that students are swayed toward a certain sexuality or gender expression. Conservative groups advocate for a rigid gender binary, not only exposing trans people, and especially trans children, to ridicule, but also revoking their agency over their own bodies and gender identities. Despite conservative fears that transitioning is an irreparable harm, frequently citing cases of detransition, the data reveals that trans people display an overwhelming increase in life satisfaction after transitioning. In a survey of 90,000 trans people, 98% of people who underwent horomone treatment reported increased satisfaction with their lives. Another study, pooling over 7,000 trans patients, shows that the rate of people detransitioning after surgery hovers around 1%. A further study of 2,242 detransitioners found that the majority detransitioned due to exterior social pressure, discrimination, sexual assault, and difficult school environments. Currently, 539 anti-trans bills are being considered across forty-one states. Many trans people and their families are fleeing anti-queer states such as Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas and Florida due to their harsh laws and uncomfortable atmospheres. Children like Benedict are currently facing harassment and danger, unable to express themselves how they wish, bullied due to their gender expression, and often facing mental health issues due the former issues. As legislation is rolled out across the country, terrible tragedies like Benedict's death are becoming more and more common. "To me, it doesn't matter if Nex passed from a traumatic brain injury or if they passed from suicide. What matters is the fact that they died after getting bullied, and that is the story for so many other students. I've been close to ending it myself because of bullying. It's not new for so many students," said a student who attends Benedict's high school.

PHOTO BY ANNA MONEYMAKER/NEW YORK TIMES

In recent years, rights for transgender individuals have been threatened.

April 11, 2024

Social life at Hamilton is isolated

by Lily Rizzoli '24
MANAGING EDITOR

Hamilton College preaches diversity, integration and inclusion. It is highlighted in every campus moment, every marketing campaign and every brochure. And sure, there is a never-ending wide range of personalities and differences on this campus. But unfortunately, integration between these unique individuals is minimal. In fact, Hamilton College's social diversity is about as present as every other New England preparatory high school.

Here is the deal: people of different backgrounds, cultures, experience levels and interests do interact at Hamilton, quite often in fact. Our wide-ranging classes and broad expanse of options due to the open curriculum do give us opportunities to connect with people that we usually would not, to share ideas and information with them. This is an extremely typical liberal arts construction of education: to integrate and blend many different personalities, experiences and ideologies. But the issue does not lie in education; the issue of integration and diverse social experiences fail outside of the Hamilton classrooms and clubs. Once class discussions and expectations are quelled, these different personalities divide, and students spend their social time with those who are just like them.

Much of this, it can be argued, is human nature. Individuals gravitate towards those with whom they have things in common. It is a normal aspect of human connection. But Hamilton does not try to push these boundaries, and the nightlife is where this divide culminates. Much of the nightlife at Hamilton is exclusive. Greek life organizations and clubs do throw parties off campus, but many aspects of these parties contribute to widening the divide between students on campus. To get to these events, one must be invited, and then further, guests are frequently expected to pay fees for tickets or entrance. Not everyone can acquire an invite, and if they do, they must be financially stable enough to pay for the entry fee and able to find a car to get them to the venue, two more hoops to jump through.

It is not just organizations on campus that contribute to a social divide. On-campus social activities also reek of exclusivity. Sports teams mix with sports teams, while theater kids party with theater kids. It never ends, and not one group is at the core of the issue. So then where does this divide come from? And who perpetrates it? I do not think there is one answer, but instead, a general sentiment that is the root of the cause. We act like high schoolers. Because our college is so small and intimate, students gain a sense of community that may emulate their high school days, and so perhaps students are led to act similarly to their high school days: moving in groups, partying in cliques and keeping their social lives exclusive.

I say this all from experience, not to pass judgment on the students at Hamilton College, but instead to try to invoke a stream of consciousness that reflects upon these divides. For example, I myself am not a member of Greek life, nor am I an athlete, nor do I partake in theater or drama. But I do manage the lovely women's basketball team, with whom I have had many fun-filled nights, though admittedly those nights are usually filled with other athletes, a descriptor I cannot claim. I am also a DJ for WHCL, whose parties I have graced, though those are filled with students who are passionate about music and arts, neither of which I have much talent in. I have fun at each of these events, but the energy is often palpably different between groups. What I am trying to convey is that—whether intentionally or not—groups of like-minded and like-talented individuals at Hamilton seem to stick together, not blend, in their social lives. Perhaps there is no cure for this, and likely, Hamilton is not alone in this phenomenon. Regardless, I can say that the most fun I have had on this campus is at events filled with the ever-varying personalities Hamilton boasts on their brochures. Days when athletes, artists, innovators, future politicians and actors come together to socialize. Much of this is why I consider C&C day to be the most enjoyable day of our school year—we come together to celebrate another school year past, all of us with one descriptor: Continental. I encourage you to simply consider this divide during your time at Hamilton. Remember that you probably chose this school in part for its eclectic offerings, wide-ranging experiences and diverse community. I urge us all to try to integrate these aspects of Hamilton College into our lives outside of the classroom walls.

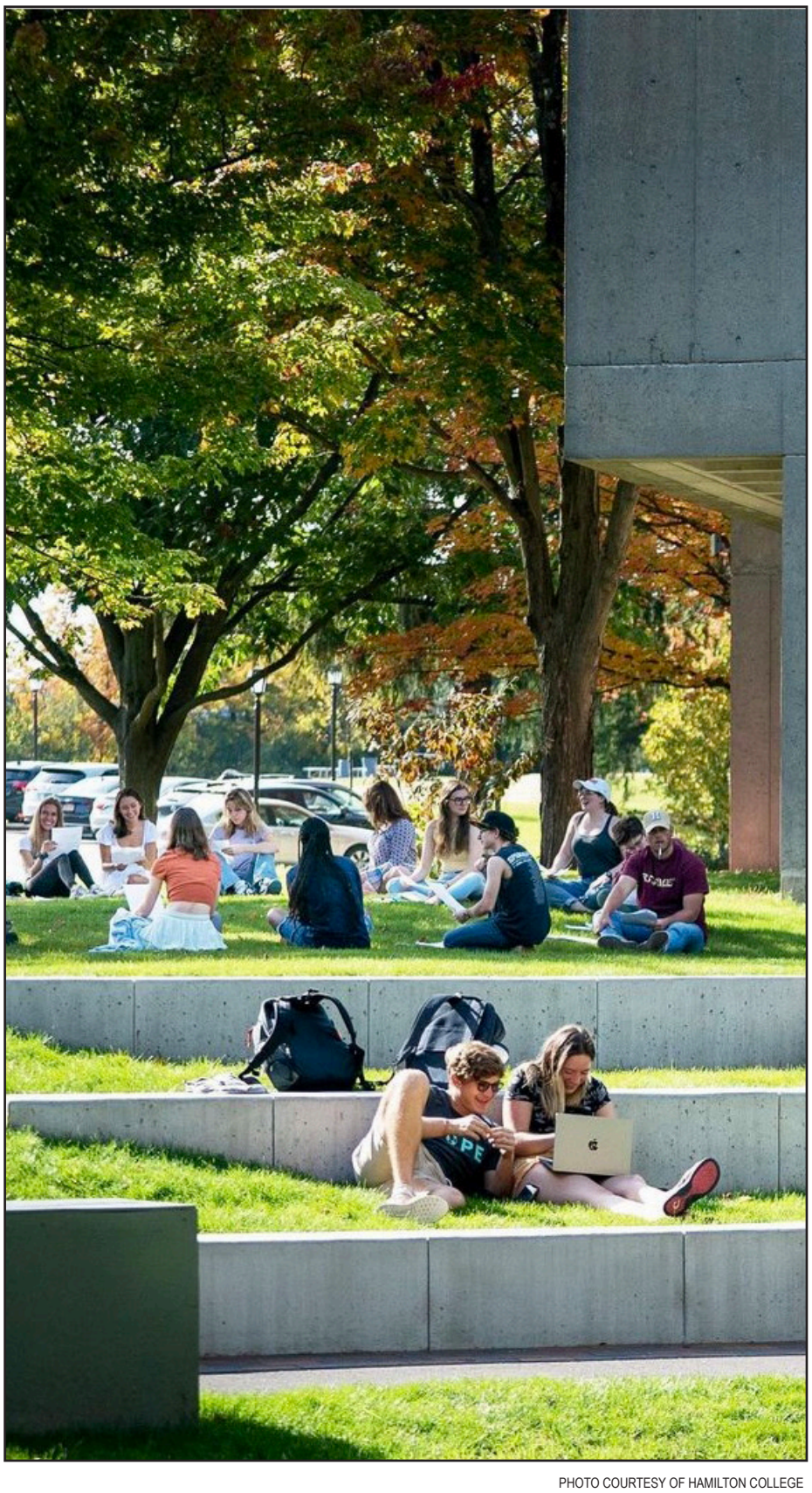


PHOTO COURTESY OF HAMILTON COLLEGE

Hamilton students participate in a myriad of social activities, primarily with those with similar interests.

Contemporaneous performs for Hamilton College

by Katie Cristiano '26
A&E CONTRIBUTER

On Saturday, April 6, Contemporaneous Ensemble graced Hamilton College with a moving performance. Nine of the original 23 member ensemble played, with a variety of instruments including a string section of cello, violin, viola and bass; a wind section of flute and clarinet; and the addition of piano and percussion. The performance was carefully modernized from the formal, black-and-white standard of most concerts. Instead, each member complemented one another in tones of red, blue and green, and most were using iPads to present their sheet music rather than sheets of paper. Almost every instrument was played solo, allowing each member's talent to soar. Even as the sounds meshed together perfectly, one could still pick out each instrument from the audience. The ensemble was founded in New York at Bard College by the conductor, David Bloom, and composer Dylan Mattingly in 2010. The ensemble has performed at schools and institutions all over the United States.

The audience for Saturday's performance was a mix of Hamiltonians and Clinton residents. Each song flowed smoothly, creating a ripple effect of emotion from the musicians to the audience. The ensemble covered a wide variety of sounds in their performance, from the light and calm tones of the first song to the fast and chaotic vibe of the third. There were seven songs in total, each adding something new to the overall performance, whether that be a different combination of instruments or the addition of voices to the mix of sounds. One theme rang true for every song, though: each relayed an entire story that was clear from start to finish and was rooted in a specific cultural context. For example, the first song had roots in "The Gambia in Africa," which the conductor explained was an ensemble project designed to bring in songs from all around the world that would inspire new and creative performances. He also explained that the ensemble works closely with composers, receiving instructions and suggestions for how to perform the piece but are also able to add in their own interpretations and ideas to make the concert unique.

Another distinctive aspect of Contemporaneous' performance was that each song was very true to its title. The audience was able to follow the story completely, and by the end, one completely understood the journey that the song laid out. For instance, the second song, "Form the Fabric" by inti Figgis-vizueta, had a clear buildup of playful, vivacious notes with separate parts from each section noticeably coming together to create something much like one does with fabric. The stage was constantly in motion, from the journey that each song took to the movement of musicians going on and off stage to the bodies of the players as they swayed with the beat, perfectly in tune with the sounds they were generating.

The ensemble has expanded in outreach and projects in the past few years with their podcast, *Imagination Radio*, which discusses the significance of music in their everyday lives through dialogues with "composers, scientists, a cartographer, and a BASE jumper." Additionally, their program, Contemporaneous IMAGINATION, allows them to take on large-scale works and more grandiose projects. They also lead "a participatory program for public school students" with the hopes of "[instilling] a passion for new music" and an appreciation for "careful listening and meaningful expression through [sound]." Contemporaneous states that their mission is to "provide composers with the opportunity to take risks and to challenge themselves," "to present…exciting music…[and] innovative performances" and "to bring educational and outreach programs to communities in need." The excitement and passion for what they do was palpable in every performer on stage. From the appreciative clapping by the audience and obvious awe during the performance, it is clear that this ensemble has accomplished their goals.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CONTEMPORANEOUS

Contemporaneous has over 100 works in varying scales of artistic scope.

April 11, 2024

The concentric circle life-span of Zoomer fashion

by Maximo Bratter '25
A&E EDITOR

There was a time when 11 a.m. on a Thursday meant something. Those aware of this time know that this is a reference to streetwear juggernaut Supreme's weekly drop schedule. This was an era of culture more so than what many consider to be fashion. I say this because there was a blatant disregard for the style of the clothes in exchange for the social connotation that wearing them would bring. Minimalist script-logo t-shirt that can match with pretty much any outfit… no thank you. Hyper-niche deliberately ironic anorak tracksuit with former President Barack Obama's face plastered all over it? I may wear it once for the meme, but the social clout is indefinite.

Between the hypebeast era of the mid-2010s and the uniformity of workwear and nondescript brands like Carhartt that dominate today's moodboard-driven monoculture, there is an identifiable bridge that connects these two seemingly disparate junctions in one's fashion self-realization. There is a life-span concentric circle showing the progression of fashion incited by the hypebeast era.

During the aforementioned hypebeast era, teenagers and older-skewing Zoomers began to define the zeitgeist while millennials controlled the production of it. In the mid-2010s, these Zoomers (and I speak from personal experience) were often transitioning from a time in their adolescence where social currency went from worthless to valuable. These children grew up playing sports or listening to music in the era of signature sneakers (i.e. Kobes, LeBrons) and brand-patented attire (i.e. Nike Dri-Fit) that epitomized capitalistic attraction toward the idealistic identities (i.e. celebrities and professional athletes) that were associated with the clothes that they were wearing. Mix this with gaudy merch for franchises or music acts that were found in mallfront stalwarts like Hot Topic and Zumiez, and the eventual integration into the overt style of hypebeast streetwear makes sense. In the model of the concentric circle, these actors expanded the intended scope of reception to their social projection from essentially just close peers to a broader audience. This coincides with a natural coming-of-age where the schools these kids go to often get bigger, more diverse and social interests start to increase beyond the trivial fun of sports and recreational play to establish oneself in the social life that they inhabit on a 24/7 basis.

The niche became mainstream and the mainstream became obsolete when the hypebeast era approached. Gone were the days of wearing athletic shorts and hoodies acquired during family trips (shout-out all the deserted Hershey hoodies); enter skinny jeans and Vans. The turn to streetwear for many in this era was an attempt to look cooler and older but not age out too quickly. Collared shirts and slacks were still too formal, but joggers and Champion hoodies hit a sweet-spot of personal growth. Streetwear occupied a space that exhibited this same personal growth but also created a binary dichotomy of self-proclaimed trendsetters and 'culture-vultures.'

Brands like Supreme and Palace were still largely associated with the skating culture that birthed them during the hypebeast era's genesis and so those making a 180-degree pivot from Nike-Elite socks and LeBron 14s to Supreme-Hanes socks and checkered vans were often met by close-friends with pause and others with accusations of appropriation. Rather than taking time to reflect on one's own style, the hypebeast business structure of the instant social gratification of its clothes mixed with a controlled leadup to each release squeezed the decision-making process for children who wanted to quickly infiltrate a new social level within the concentric circle. The rapid-fire succession of clothing and sneaker releases, all substantially hyped during this period, forced the hands of those who wanted to invest in what they saw as a rising stock: both the actual resale value for the products for future riddance and the social value. For those who could not afford box-logos or Bape shark-hoodies, small accessories like underwear or tank-tops with minimal-but-overt-enough branding to project their knowledge of the culture without being able to fully buy in.

The appeal of the hypebeast era was exacerbated by celebrities who were young enough to have wanted sought-after streetwear with the current means to finally afford it and flaunt it relentlessly. Pivotal pop-culture moments rippled across the youth, such as the XXL 2016 Freshman Cypher, where Lil Yachty donned an Jordan Brand x Supreme hoodie. No media conglomerate was more influential in this era as Complex. From their *Sneaker Shopping* installments to their *Closets* series, celebrities who were teetering on mainstream notoriety like Tyga and DJ Khaled vaulted into the zeitgeist with their exorbitant expenditures. And effectively into the hearts and minds of mini-hypebeasts everywhere.

Growing out of the hypebeast phase of walking billboards is a yearning to blend into the masses. Young adulthood often entails college, entering new social networks and a further broadening of one's audience. Workwear brands like Carharrt and Dickies provide refuge to those who have started to care more about fits than pieces. Supreme and Bape pieces are difficult to insert into certain outfits with their high flamboyance and wacky graphics, in addition to how their tonality does not fit all settings the same way understated workwear can. You would not wear a Supreme work-shirt filled with ironic obscenities to class or a menial job the same way you could wear a solid-colored Dickies one. There is still room for youthful exuberance and streetwear in this part of the life cycle; brands like Stüssy and Dime offer a mix of timeless pieces that would likely not be designed by a fast-fashion entity but are not so outlandish as to be definitely a branded item rather

PHOTO COURTESY OF SUPREME

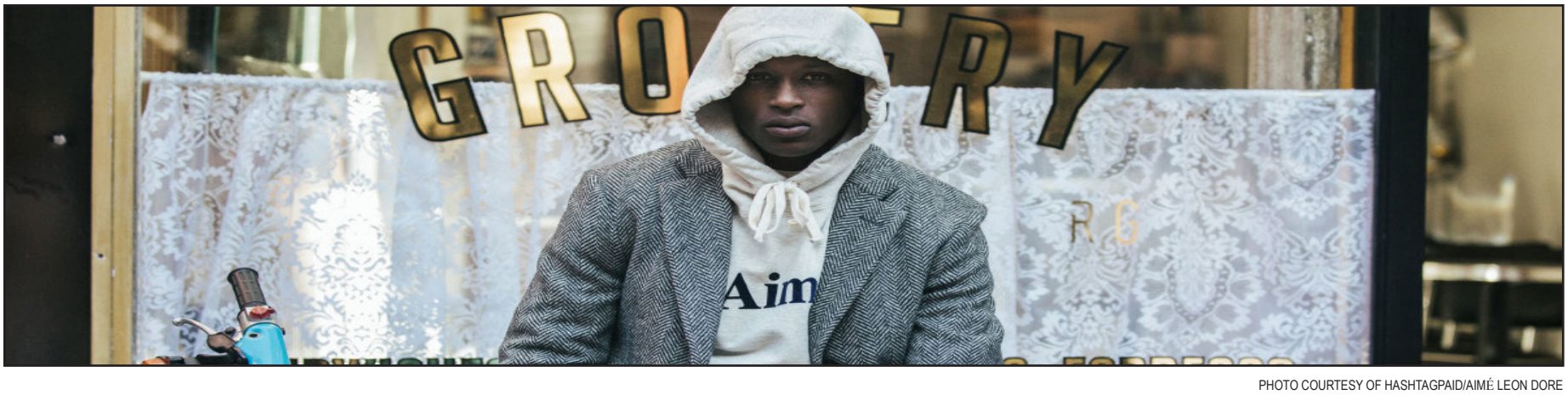
Supreme has been a icon of streetwear since the late 1990s.

designed by a fast-fashion entity but are not so outlandish as to be definitely a branded item rather than passing as a standard article of clothing.

You are now getting older, probably near the end of your educational career, and are entering the white-collar workforce with aspirations of dressing up beyond your means to physically showcase what status class you aspire to be a member of. Brands like Aimé Leon Dore and Noah allow you to cosplay as old-money when you are really just trying to get some new money. They ooze a mature sense of financial freedom that the aforementioned brands seem disconnected to in their naivety. What ALD and Noah do is dress up streetwear to the extent that it blurs the lines of what that designation truly is. Instead of a $45 fleece beanie, you now wear an $85 one that is crocheted and shows your refined taste.

All experiments eventually reach their conclusion, and a lot of the time, people want to return to the comfort of their earlier wardrobes but just update it for contemporary times. J. Crew and Abercrombie & Fitch have rebranded toward this audience accordingly, providing cost-efficient alternatives to essentially high-fashion streetwear like ALD. More than this though, there is an accessibility and tactile aspect to this phase. First branding mattered, then the aesthetic of the entire outfit did and now how it physically dresses is of the utmost importance, and the masses of physical storefronts for brands like J. Crew and A&F provide extra security to the return on investment that buying new clothes should guarantee at this point in one's life.

The concentric circle model is more appropriate for these patterns of life than a chronological timeline plot because in the latter, you cannot go back in time. But in the concentric circle, as in life, you can traverse inward and outward of the model as you see fit. Fashion, culture and personal taste is not static and no one should ever feel stuck in one of the phases that I have explained.



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Fashion trends may often reflect one's individual development or the ways in which one might immerse onesself within the cultural zeitgeist.

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Hamilton College spring sports roundup

by Owen Lewis '24
SPORTS EDITOR

As the snow melts and the weather grows warm enough for people to voluntarily go outside, spring sports are into the second half of their seasons. Here is a look at how Hamilton's sports teams have fared so far this season and their upcoming events. Shake off that post-eclipse funk by attending a game or following along.

Men's lacrosse: The men's lacrosse team is 6-4 so far this season, with a 3-4 record within the NESCAC, and while they lost their last game, they have won three of their last five. The season got off to a dominant start with a 21-8 win over Bates and an even more lopsided 22-1 thrashing of Colby. Coming off a 7-8 season in 2023, the Continentals look to finish strong with a winning record.

Next event: Apr. 10, away game vs. Williams, 5 p.m.

Women's lacrosse: After a 3-0 start, women's lacrosse is now 4-4 after a recent string of losses. However, two of those defeats were to top-10 ranked opponents in Tufts and Colby, and the Continentals have rebounded in their most recent game with a 9-8 victory over #18 Amherst.

Next event: Apr. 10, away game vs. Williams, 7 p.m.

Women's Track and Field: In their last event, the women's track and field team made their best showing of the season, placing second among 17 teams in the Pioneer Spring Invitational at Utica University.

Next event: Apr. 12, RPI Under the Lights at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, 3 p.m.

Men's Track and Field: The men's team placed seventh of 16 at the Pioneer Spring Invitational. Jack Quinn '27 made a promising debut in the steeplechase, winning the ten-person field in 9:49.73. Hugh Williams '26 made the podium in the 800 meters, finishing third in 2:01.35.

Next event: RPI Under the Lights at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Apr. 12, 3 pm.

Softball: The softball team started the season 4-0 and currently stands at 12-12, having lost their last three games. Their most recent games were a pair of losses to Tufts in a doubleheader, 3-1 and 4-2. The Continentals are 3-1 in away games this season, which could become 4-1 if they beat Bates this coming Saturday.

Next event: Apr. 13 at Bates College, 1 p.m.

Baseball: The Continentals aim to break a six-game losing streak against Wesleyan on Apr. 12. Currently 7-11, the team had a 5-1 stretch prior to the start of the losing streak, offering optimism that they can deliver a satisfying finish to the season. Down 12-5 in their last loss, Hamilton made an almighty surge in the eighth inning to pull back six runs, only to lose 12-11 in the end. Regardless of their record, the team is not short on heart.

Next event: Apr. 12 vs. Wesleyan at home, 4 p.m.

Women's tennis: The women's tennis team is 4-5 on the season, coming off a pair of 7-2 losses to Bowdoin and Colby. #1 singles player Hannah Apsey '25 is 2-6 in singles this season, though she and Stephanie Pratt '25, who plays in the second singles spot, have partnered for a 6-2 record in doubles.

Next event: Apr. 13 vs. Connecticut College at home, 2 p.m.

Men's Tennis: The men's team is 6-7 and 0-5 in conference. They have lost their last four. Connor Griff '25 opened the season with eight straight wins in the #1 singles slot, though he has lost his last two, one of them very closely in a 10-point tiebreak.

Next event: Apr. 13 vs. Connecticut College at home, 10 a.m.

Men's Golf: On Apr. 9, the Continentals won a title at the 13-team event at the DuPont Country Club. Ramon Aroca Gonzalez '26 led the team and earned an individual medal, while Tyler Tornoe '25 and Will Whittaker '25 finished just outside the top 10, tying for 12th.

Next event: Apr. 13 at Dr. Tim Brown Invitational, 1:30 p.m.

Women's Golf: The women's team has also won an event recently, taking the crown at the Garden State Collegiate Classic on Apr. 5 and 6. Sofia Weinstein '24 placed second overall in the 56-golfer, 10-team meet, with Peyton Sichol '26 just one stroke behind in a tie for third. Angela Liu '27 rounded out the top ten, tying for 10th.

Next event: Apr. 13 at Martin/Wallace Invitational, 10 a.m.

Women's Rowing: The women's rowing team is ranked ninth nationally and kicked off their season with a defeat of Marietta College followed by a close loss to Ithaca College, who are ranked just one spot higher at 8th. On Apr. 6, the Continentals' varsity eight finished second in a high-quality field including four other teams ranked nationally, crossing the finish line just thre and a half seconds behind #1 Wesleyan.

Next event: Apr. 14 at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, 9 a.m.

Men's Rowing: On Apr. 6, the men's rowing team finished third of four boats in the Class of 2003 Cup, just under six seconds behind second place and just under 13 seconds out of first. The team ranked eighth in the Intercollegiate Rowing Coaches Association preseason poll for Division III.

Next event: Apr. 14 at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, 9 a.m.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JOSH MCKEE

Sofia Weinstein '24 placed second at the Garden State Collegiate Classic.

April 11, 2024

A closer look at Hamilton Basketball Club

by Pat Cleary '24
SPORTS EDITOR

This week, *The Spectator* sat down for an interview with the Co-Presidents of Basketball Club, Carter Segal '25 and Cooper Xu '25. Here's what they had to say:

What inspired you to start this club?
Cooper: When we were freshmen, Friday and Saturday nights were the prime time slots for pickup runs at Hamilton. I'm talking 30-40 kids each time and we could barely get on the court. A community was born and we made a lot of friends through these runs. Starting sophomore year, however, the runs disappeared. The only times people got together to play was when someone texted in the intramural basketball group chat. [Segal] and I felt that Hamilton was missing a basketball community and decided to create Basketball Club so that people knew on Friday nights they could come to play ball.

Who's your basketball playstyle comp?
Carter: I would consider my NBA comp to be Desmond Bane. I am definitely a little undersized, but my shooting off the catch and my dribbling aility opens everything up for both myself and my teammates. I love using off-ball movement to strain defenses, and I think that there are very few players in the NBA that know how to tie up the defense with their movement like Bane.
Cooper: Connor Jenkins...If you know, you know.

What got you interested in basketball?
Cooper: Soccer was my first sport but I was trash. No improvement in six years. Decided to look for other opportunities and found more enjoyment using my hands instead of my feet. Also the culture and community for basketball is fire.

What does an average session look like?
Carter: This semester, we have been hosting basketball club at the end of the week on Friday. After such long weeks, we have found that most people primarily want to just play in open-run pickup basketball, so that is what we've been doing. We typically will have two half-court games going on simultaneously, and try to split the courts up by how intense the game is intended to be. This is providing everyone with a set time in the week where they can get reps in, work on their game, and most of all, just play basketball without the stress that can be baked into more organized runs and leagues.

Who is this club for?
Carter: This club is for everyone in the Hamilton community who is interested in basketball in any capacity! Our goal is to provide an inclusive environment for anyone who loves basketball and wants to kickstart their weekend with open runs and all of our great club members. I know that for me, pickup basketball provided a really easy and fun way to get involved in the Hamilton community. So likewise, we really encourage Continentals of all skill levels and backgrounds to check out Basketball Club because everyone should get a chance to have that same invaluable experience. At the end of the day, this club is not a hard sell – it is basketball.

Did you run into any troubles when you first started the club? Have any others shown up since?
Cooper: The main problem we had was just not having enough people to help run the club at first. The weekly pickup sessions were hard for Carter and I to attend consistently due to conflicts with the basketball season and schoolwork. Being able to recruit more e-board members definitely helped for the day-to-day running of the club. No other troubles have shown up except we often have to track down where our basketballs went.

How has Hamilton's Basketball Club changed since you first started?
Carter: At basketball club's first ever meeting last winter, we had three students who came to play (unintentionally – they did not know that basketball club existed) in some light-hearted two-on-two matches. Even as the semester progressed, our membership improved to 10-15 people on our best weeks, but it did not change the fact that every meeting, the environment remained supportive, energetic and most importantly really fun. Even these past two semesters, we have consistently had 20-30 players on any given week, and it has not changed what basketball club is at its core. Despite these tangible aspects of the club that have changed such as volume of people, the skill

PHOTO COURTESY OF CARTER SEGAL '25

Basketball Club members engaged in five-on-five basketball action in Alumni Fieldhouse.

getting involved with off the court, the supportive environment that promotes growth as players and teammates has stayed the same. And while I am so proud of all of these great things that have changed for our club and has provided us the platform for expansion and growth, I am most proud of how our initial mission of providing that encouraging environment for the Hamilton community has stayed the course.

Outside of pickup runs, what other activities is the club involved in?
Cooper: We are in the works of planning an NBA watch party event on April 20 for the first day of playoffs! We will have catered food too. This is something we are trying to do more and more of: continuing to build that basketball community on campus. We are also hosting a NESCAC day of service where Clinton Elementary School kids will come up to Alumni gym to play basketball with the club.

As you enter your final year of college, what do you hope for basketball club after you've left Hamilton?
Carter: As many seniors know, COVID did a number on the pickup basketball scene at Hamilton. I understand that only so much progress and growth can happen in just five semesters. That said, I truly am hopeful that, by the time Cooper and I graduate, we have laid the foundation for what I believe could be one of the most impactful clubs at Hamilton. On the court, we hope to have reestablished a platform for the Hamilton community to come together and bond over this shared interest. I also hope that we have established the potential for what basketball club can be off the court through events such as charity fundraisers, skill-development clinics for the greater Clinton area, and NBA watch-parties for those who can't get enough hoops from just the 2 hours of pickup alone. We are going to be leaving the club in good hands, but that means it is going to be on our next generation of club leaders to advance the scope in which basketball can provide for everyone on the hill.

What do you hope to accomplish with basketball club?
Cooper: Very simple: create a community of basketball on campus. You get to see people who you know because every week you played basketball together and bonded over that experience.

Best story since you started the club?
Cooper: Cooking e-board member Akay when he tried to play me one on one.
Carter: Not exactly a story, but just seeing how much all of our regular attendees have developed as players since last year. They show up weekly ready to try new things and get better and the results really do show. I feel like every meeting I go to this year, I see someone expand out of their comfort zone and try new moves and play with confidence that they didn't have a year ago. I love how this club has served as a platform for them to get runs in with the sole purpose of practice and that it has actually panned out and has fostered a great group of players who I would love to have by my side in any pickup game.

Anything else to add for *The Spectator*?
Carter: I just want to throw some shoutouts here to some very deserving people. First of all, to our E-Board of Kaljang Sherpa, Ben Zhao, Akay Kaya, Hank Morgan, and Sandor Lin. Our club picked up so many people in such a short amount of time to start the year, and all of these people readily volunteered to step up and help maintain the club and keep it functional, and we would not have been able to achieve as much success as we have had without them. On that same note but deserving his own shoutout, Cooper has been the best Co-President you could ever ask for. There is so much logistical work that goes into starting up, running, and maintaining a club and Cooper was essential for all of it going smoothly. Even while balancing classes and being in season, Cooper has been so supportive, communicative, and resourceful as a Co-President, and there is absolutely no one else I would rather have taken up this project with. And finally, I want to thank everyone who comes to basketball club and makes it what it is. Logistical work aside, Cooper and I are not doing anything that groundbreaking. At the end of the day, we have such a great group of people who show up every Friday eager to play and cultivate the environment we have today. They are the ones who make the club so special and I am so thankful for their continued support, attendance, and leadership in Alumni.
Cooper: I think Carter said it all, thank you to everyone for their support!

PHOTO COURTESY OF CARTER SEGAL '25

Basketball Club provides a fun, welcoming environment for hoopers on campus.